

Follows Congressman's Calls for Swift Resolution to Safety and Convenience Concerns

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MEDIA, PA — Today, Congressman Joe Sestak (PA-07) expressed his approval of the opening of a new cell phone lot for the Philadelphia International Airport, applauding the construction of a safe, convenient and well-marked lot that our region has long-deserved.

In September, after the sudden announcement of immediate vigorous enforcement of new "no parking," "standing" or "stopping" signs on highway ramps around the airport, the Congressman urged officials to immediately address concerns of safety and convenience. He wrote to the Administrator of the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) and the Secretary of the Pennsylvania Department of Transportation (PennDot), urging the city, state and airport to immediately come together to find a solution.

In addition, the Congressman joined AAA Mid-Atlantic to point out safety hazards and common sense solutions. Following the Congressman's letter, Deputy Mayor Rina Cutler called for a meeting with FHWA and PennDOT. An agreement was reached to open the new cell-phone waiting lot as well as clear signs with instructions on finding it would be in place by January 1st.

"This is simply about good governance and having the agencies involved take initiative and show some leadership to resolve the situation in a safe and convenient way," said Congressman Sestak. "I am pleased that following our correspondence in September, local and

regional officials were able to move swiftly to address a serious safety concern for motorists and provide driver and passengers with a convenience they should expect."

The Congressman noted the comments made by AAA Mid-Atlantic representative Catherine L. Rossi at their press conference in September where she stated: "What we don't want is motorists driving around the airport holding cell phones to their ears because they have no legitimate place to pull over and they can't find the cell phone lot. That's dangerously distracting and telling them to pull over to make a call isn't going to cut it if enforcement is underway."

Philadelphia International Airport annually accommodates 31.8 million passengers and 500,000 flights, but until now was without a cell phone parking lot within the airport, while unclear signage with fine print told motorists to "Use Bartram Ave. Park Ramp; Ride Lot to wait for arriving flights" without any directions to that location.

The new, well-lit lot replaces the Bartram Avenue lot. It will accommodate 150 cars and is conveniently situated across from the A East-A West parking garage on a paved section of the former Industrial Highway (Route 291) that has sat vacant since its closure last year.

"In order to be considered among the top metropolitan areas, we must offer our residents and visitors the same amenities as other world-class cities, including an airport that is convenient and accessible," said Congressman Sestak. "I hope that the efficient process followed since September will serve as a model for solving problems in the future."

*Born and raised in Delaware County, former 3-star Admiral Joe Sestak served in the Navy for 31 years and now serves as the Representative from the 7th District of Pennsylvania. He led a series of operational commands at sea, including Commander of an aircraft carrier battle group of 30 U.S. and allied ships with over 15,000 sailors and 100 aircraft that conducted operations in Afghanistan and Iraq. After 9/11, Joe was the first Director of "Deep Blue," the Navy's anti-terrorism unit that established strategic and operations policies for the "Global War on Terrorism." He served as President Clinton's Director for Defense Policy at the National Security Council in the White House, and holds a Ph.D. in Political Economy and Government from Harvard University. According to the office of the House Historian, Joe is the highest-ranking former military officer ever elected to the U.S. Congress.*